

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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EASLEY ANNOUNCES CREATION OF SMALL BUSINESS TASK FORCE

RALEIGH - Gov. Mike Easley today announced the creation of a small business task force within the Economic Development Board to examine and evaluate the small business climate within North Carolina. At Easley's request, the task force is being included in "The Studies Act of 2003" (H.B. 674). Co-Speakers Jim Black and Richard Morgan supported the request.

"Over 150,000 of North Carolina's businesses employ 50 or fewer employees," said Easley. "These small businesses are the cornerstones of our communities and help to keep our economy strong. We need a careful examination of what we are doing right and what we can improve to ensure that North Carolina provides the type of environment in which these small businesses can thrive. I appreciate the support of the Co-Speakers and the General Assembly in this endeavor"

"Economic development in North Carolina is dependent upon the growth, preservation and long-term success of our state's small businesses," said Co-Speaker Jim Black (Mecklenburg). "We must do everything we can to help foster an environment that promotes and rewards small business expansion throughout North Carolina. I believe this is a step in the right direction."

"Small businesses are the engine of growth for this state and a vital part of our economy," said Co-Speaker Richard Morgan (Moore).

The Task Force will be comprised of 15 individuals from the Economic Development Board and will study:

- Agencies and programs that provide assistance to new an existing small businesses;
- The impact of state tax laws on small businesses;
- Fiscal and tax policies affecting small businesses in other states;
- The need for a central agency to provide assistance to small businesses in obtaining necessary licenses and permits;
- The need for a comprehensive communications strategy for small businesses;
- The need for a Small Business Micro-Loan Program; and
- Other issues relating to small business concerns.

The Task Force will make an initial report to the Economic Development Board by May 2004, and a final report by January 2005.

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